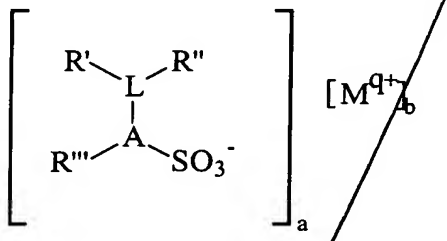
1. A surfactant composition comprising:

alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprising at least two isomers of the alkylarylsulfonate surfactant of the formula:



wherein:

L is an acyclic aliphatic hydrocarbyl of from 6 to 18 carbon atoms in total;

M is a cation or cation mixture and q is the valence thereof;

a and b are numbers selected such that said composition is electroneutral;

R' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

R" is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

R"' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

both R' and R" are nonterminally attached to L and at least one of R' and R" is C_1 to C_3 alkyl; and

A is aryl; and

wherein:

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprises two or more isomers with respect to positions of attachment of R', R" and A to L;

in at least 60% of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system, A is attached to L in the position which is selected from positions alpha- and beta- to either of the two terminal carbon atoms thereof; and

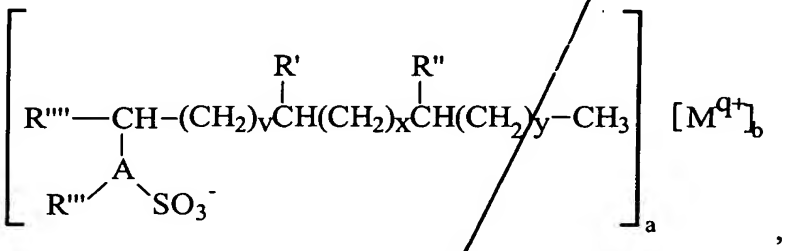
wherein further said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has at least one of the following properties:

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has a ratio of nonquaternary to quaternary carbon atoms in L of at least 10:1 by weight, when said quaternary carbon atoms are present; and

there is no more than 40% by weight loss as measured by Hardness Tolerance Test.

2. A surfactant composition comprising:

alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprising at least two isomers, counted exclusive of ortho-, meta-, para-, and stereoisomers, of an alkylarylsulfonate surfactant of the formula:



wherein M is a cation, q is the valence of said cation, a and b are numbers selected such that said composition is electroneutral; A is aryl; R''' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; R' is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; R" is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; and R'''' is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_4 alkyl; v is an integer from 0 to 10; x is an integer from 0 to 10; y is an integer from 0 to 10; wherein:

the total number of carbon atoms attached to A is less than 20;

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprises two or more isomers with respect to positions of attachment of R', R" and A to the moiety R''''-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 of this formula;

at least one of R' and R" is C_1 to C_3 alkyl; when R'''' is C_1, the sum of v + x + y is at least 1; and when R'''' is H, the sum of v + x + y is at least 2; and

in at least 60% of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system, A is attached to the moiety R''''-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 in the position which is selected from positions alpha- and beta- to either of the two terminal carbon atoms thereof;

wherein further said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has at least one of the following properties:

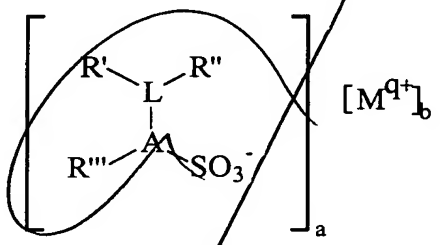
said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has a ratio of nonquaternary to quaternary carbon atoms in the moiety

R""-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 of at least 10:1 by weight, when said quaternary carbon atoms are present; and

there is no more than 40% by weight loss as measured by Hardness Tolerance Test.

3. A surfactant composition comprising:

a) from 0.01% to 99.99% by weight of an alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprising at least two isomers of the alkylarylsulfonate surfactant of the formula:



wherein:

L is an acyclic aliphatic hydrocarbyl of from 6 to 18 carbon atoms in total;

M is a cation or cation mixture and q is the valence thereof;

a and b are numbers selected such that said composition is electroneutral;

R' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

R" is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

R''' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl;

both R' and R" are nonterminally attached to said L and at least one of R' and R" is C_1 to C_3 alkyl; and

A is aryl; and

wherein:

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprises two or more isomers with respect to positions of attachment of R', R" and A to L;

in at least 60% of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system, A is attached to L in the position which is selected from positions alpha- and beta- to either of the two terminal carbon atoms thereof; and

wherein further said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has at least one of the following properties:

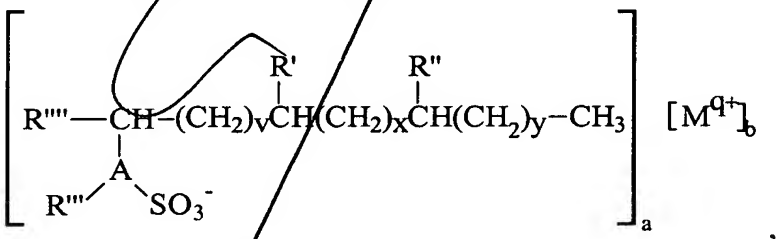
said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has a ratio of nonquaternary to quaternary carbon atoms in L of at least 10:1 by weight, when said quaternary carbon atoms are present; and

there is no more than 40% by weight loss as measured by Hardness Tolerance Test; and

b) from 0.01% to 99.99% by weight of at least one isomer of the linear analog of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant (a).

4. A surfactant composition comprising:

a) from 0.01% to 99.99% by weight of an alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprising at least two isomers, counted exclusive of ortho-, meta-, para- and stereoisomers, of an alkylarylsulfonate surfactant of the formula:



wherein M is a cation, q is the valence of said cation, a and b are numbers selected such that said composition is electroneutral; A is aryl; R''' is selected from H and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; R' is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; R" is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_3 alkyl; and R"" is selected from hydrogen and C_1 to C_4 alkyl; v is an integer from 0 to 10; x is an integer from 0 to 10; y is an integer from 0 to 10; wherein:

the total number of carbon atoms attached to A is less than 20;

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system comprises two or more isomers with respect to positions of attachment of R', R" and A to the moiety R""-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 of this formula;

at least one of R' and R" is C_1 to C_3 alkyl; when R"" is C_1, the sum of v + x + y is at least 1; and when R"" is H, the sum of v + x + y is at least 2; and

in at least 60% of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system, A is attached to the moiety

R""-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 in the position which is selected from positions alpha- and beta- to either of the two terminal carbon atoms thereof; and

wherein further said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has at least one of the following properties:

said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant system has a ratio of nonquaternary to quaternary carbon atoms in the moiety

R""-C(-)H$(CH_2)_v$C(-)H$(CH_2)_x$C(-)H$(CH_2)_y$-CH_3 of at least 10:1 by weight, when said quaternary carbon atoms are present; and

there is no more than 40% by weight loss as measured by Hardness Tolerance Test; and

b) from 0.01% to 99.99% by weight of at least one isomer of the linear analog of said alkylarylsulfonate surfactant (a).

5. A surfactant composition according to any one of Claims 1-4 wherein A is selected from the group consisting of:

i) benzene;

ii) toluene;

iii) xylene;

iv) naphthalene; and

v) mixtures thereof.

6. A surfactant composition according to any one of Claims 1-5 wherein A is benzene.

7. A surfactant composition according to any one of Claims 1-6 wherein one of R' and R" is methyl or ethyl.

8. A surfactant composition according to any one of Claims 1-7 wherein one of R' and R" is methyl.

9. A cleaning composition comprising

i) from 0.01% to 99.99% by weight of a surfactant composition according to any one of Claims 1-9; and

ii) from 0.0001% to 99.99% by weight of a cleaning additive.

ADD a3